

to control the skates correctly.

The European patent no. 0 710 141 filed on 19<sup>th</sup> July 1994 discloses a footwear that falls within this second category as mentioned above; it is in fact provided with an upper which is made of a soft and breathable material and is interconnected with support means that leave the dorsal zone of the upper free; these support means are adapted to sustain the upper so as to enable the skater to keep the skate in its vertical position, and comprise a base onto which the sole of the upper is interconnected in correspondence of the heel and toe zones; in correspondence of the toe zone, the upper is fixed along the sides of the base by means of rivets or by gluing.

The French patent application no. 2 668 072, filed on 19<sup>th</sup> October 1990, refers again to a footwear for skates belonging to the second above-mentioned category, in which a soft upper is rigidly associated to a rigid outsole; a rigid counter, which is also associated rigidly to said rigid outsole, encloses the rear portion of the upper in such a manner as to enable the ankle to swing back and forth, while being unable to bend sideward.

In order to be able to ensure that the upper be firmly kept, the base or the rigid outsole of the skate boots according to the state of the art, as defined by the two above-cited prior documents, must be provided with containment elements in order to limit the movement possibilities for the upper; such containment elements, which are substantially in the shape of a shell or a peripheral wall, are positioned in correspondence of the heel and, possibly, the toe.

A major drawback that is encountered in such kinds of boots lies in the fact that the presence of these containment elements has the effect of heavily limiting the possibility to use the same rigid support, or at least the same rigid base, in conjunction with uppers of two or more contiguous

5

10

**CLAIMS**

1. Structure of a footwear for roller skates or ice skates comprising a soft upper (4, 104), a rigid support (5, 105) provided with a plate (7, 107), from which a pair of arms (8a, 8b, 26, 108a, 108b) extend upwards to  
15 embrace and support at least laterally said upper (104), said footwear (3, 103) being adapted to be associated to a frame (2, 102) supporting means for resting and gliding or rolling on the ground, **characterized in that** it further comprises an insole (6, 106) made of a substantially rigid material and at least partially contained within said soft upper (4, 104).

20

2. Structure according to claim 1, in which said insole (6, 106) is wholly contained within said soft upper (4, 104).

3. Structure according to claim 1, in which said footwear (3) is  
25 associable to said frame (2) in correspondence of the lower surface of said plate (7).

4. Structure according to claim 3, in which said plate (7) substantially extends from the zone of the heel to the zone of the toe and has a  
30 transverse extension corresponding approximately to the transverse extension (A) of the surface of said frame (2) facing said plate (7) and adapted to be coupled thereto.

5. Structure according to claim 1, in which the ends of said plate (7) are open and free of vertical walls.

6. Structure according to claim 1, in which said insole (6), said soft upper (4) and said plate (7) are connected both with each other and said frame (2) in correspondence of the toe and heel zones with the help of removable connection means located approximately in correspondence of the longitudinal median axis of said plate (7).

10 7. Structure according to claim 1, in which said pair of side arms (8a, 8b, 108a, 108b) are an integral part of said rigid support (5, 105).

8. Structure according to one or more of the preceding claims, in which said footwear (3) further comprises a cuff (17) pivotally associated to said side arms (8a, 8b) of said rigid support (5).

9. Structure according to one or more of the preceding claims, in which said pair of side arms (26) are an integral part of a cuff (17) pivotally associated to said rigid support (5) in correspondence of a pair of brackets (27) belonging to said plate (7).

10. Structure according to claim 1, in which said plate (7, 107) extends at least in the zone of the plantar arch.

25 11. Structure according to claim 10, in which said plate (7) is attached to said rigid insole (6) in correspondence of the zone of the plantar arch.

12. Structure according to one or more of the preceding claims, in which said rigid support (5) is obtained integral with said frame (2), forming a single-piece construction therewith.

13. Structure according to claim 10, in which said plate (107) is connected to said frame (102) in correspondence of recessed seats (130,

131) situated between and adjacent to resting surfaces (132, 133) provided on said frame (102) for the heel and toe portions of the foot, respectively.

5     **14.** Structure according to claim 13, in which said upper (104) is connected to said frame (102) in correspondence of said resting surfaces (132, 133).

10     **15.** Structure according to claim 14, in which said plate (107) extends underneath said upper (104) to essentially cover the plantar arch zone of the foot.